Get tested on June 27, National HIV Testing Day

Know. Manage. Live

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CONTACT:
Brenda Cummings
(334) 206-5364

More than 1.2 million people in the U.S. are living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), but one in six are not aware that they are positive. All Americans between the ages of 13-64 should get tested for HIV as part of their routine health care. Early diagnosis and treatment extends life and helps prevent the spread of HIV.

HIV is a virus that weakens the body's immune system by destroying its T-cells until it can no longer defend itself against infection and other illnesses such as pneumonia, tuberculosis and cancerous tumors.

National HIV Testing Day is set for June 27. The Alabama Department of Public Health, Division of HIV Prevention and Care, is promoting its **Know. Manage. Live.** campaign. This slogan represents an HIV awareness strategy focused on testing and prevention, treatment and healthier living. It is important that all individuals learn the facts, get tested, and take action to protect themselves and their partners.

National Testing Day events highlight the importance of "knowing your HIV status" and making HIV testing a routine part of medical care. Staying "HIV free" means reducing or eliminating behaviors that increase the risks of contracting the virus through sharing needles or equipment for drug use; having unprotected sex with someone who may be infected; and transmitting from mother to child at birth or during breastfeeding.

"Getting tested for HIV provides you good baseline information on your test result and what actions to take to stay healthy or seek treatment," Sharon Jordan, director of the Division of HIV Prevention and Care with the Alabama Department of Public Health, said.

"Left untreated, HIV infection can cause serious health problems," Ms. Jordan added, "However, earlier testing can lead to early treatment to stay healthier, delay and prevent complications caused by disease. Taking your health seriously begins with you, so consider getting your HIV test today at a local community event or health facility."

For more information about HIV and free testing, visit our website at www.adph.org/aids.

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